

Organization of Branch of Drama League Assured

By JULIA CHANDLER MANN.

Miss Ethel M. Smith stands sponsor for a movement begun last week to organize a Washington branch of the Drama League of America, in which project she has had pledged already the support of Judge Wendell P. Stafford, Mrs. G. L. Stormont, Judge Julian Mack, of the Commerce Court; Mr. Ralph Graves, Mrs. Otto P. Simon, Miss Lella Mecklin, of the Washington Fine Arts Society; Capt. J. R. Frothingham, Mr. John Van Schick, Rev. E. R. Dunlap, Mr. George F. Bowerman, of the Public Library; Mr. John L. Gorce, Mr. Nelson E. Bell, and Mr. Gilbert Grosvenor, of the National Geographic Society.

The organization of the Drama League of America occurred in Chicago April 23, 1910, with Mrs. A. Starr Best as the dominating spirit of the club, which avowed its purpose of studying the drama and patronizing only worthy plays. The idea made instant appeal, and a league that is nation-wide has grown out of the little Chicago project in the incredible short time of two years, influencing a taste for better drama throughout the country; crowding out vicious plays by commendable, and attending only worthy theatrical productions, and building up audiences for good plays through study classes, reading circles, and lectures.

As put forth clearly in a little booklet issued by the Drama League on its origin and growth, the idea of the organization is the "banding together of all the forces already working for better drama. Realizing that the blame for the present situation does not lie with the managers alone, but primarily with the audience, since the theater must remain a commercial proposition, the managers giving the people the kind of plays they are willing to support, the league sees the saving of the situation, the solution of the problem to be entirely in the hands of the audience. It therefore aims to create an organized audience which shall demand and support only worthy plays."

This purpose the league fulfills, not through censorship, but through a system of issuing bulletins giving information about new plays and appraising their value. This assistance rendered the theater-going public in making a selection of plays worth their time and money comes through a judicial and discriminating "playgoing committee," appointed by the league to see and report upon all new productions. If the league disapproves a play, silence is maintained, the aim being to kill the production by non-support.

As a rule accepted standards are used as a basis of criticism for determining what plays are of sufficient artistic merit to be bulletined.

Because of its practical and economic assistance to theater-goers, as well as its educational value to all classes of people, the Drama League has had a phenomenal growth, having now large branches in each of the five producing cities of America, with the exception of Washington, which is one of the most active cities of the nation in the presentation of the premieres of new plays, as a consequence of which more than usual interest is felt in the project to establish a branch of the Drama League of America here, which branch shall

WHAT THE WEEK OFFERS.

National—"Our Wives."
Belasco—"Never Say Die."
Columbia—"Madame Sherry."
Chase's—"Polite Vaudeville."
Academy—"The Little Tenderfoot."
Polite—"Vaudeville."
Gayety—"The Gaiety Girls."
Cosmos—"Vaudeville."
Lyceum—"Stars of Stagedale."
Casino—"Vaudeville."
Garden—"Vaudeville."

have the right to issue bulletins independently.

Washington theatergoers are at last to have an opportunity of passing judgment on "Our Wives," the comedy of social manners for which success in many foreign countries is claimed.

The piece will be presented for the first time in America at the National this week by Mr. Joseph M. Galtes, who secured the speaking rights in competition with many important American and English managers. The original production of "Our Wives" was made in Germany, under the title of "The Friends of Youth," where it was played the Kaiser that he paid the author, Ludwig Fulda, the compliment of accrediting him with having written the funniest play of modern times.

After its initial success in Germany the piece was produced under varying titles—and always with a change of locale—in Austria, France, Sweden, Russia, Italy, and even in Spain, where Maria Guerrero, the noted Spanish actress, presented it at the Teatro Espanol.

In accordance with his belief that no play should be produced in one country with the locale of another, Mr. Galtes will present here a thoroughly Americanized version of the drama made by Helen Kraft and Frank Mandel. Mr. Galtes has chosen a company of notable players for the American production of "Our Wives," the cast being headed by Mr. Henry Kolker, who was leading man of the New Theater, in New York, and has been starred under his own name.

In Mr. Kolker's support is Miss Pamela Gaythorne, the English comedienne, who came to this country to take the leading role of the New Theater's production of "Nobody's Daughter," and last year starred in John Galtworthy's "The Pigeon."

William Collier comes to the Belasco to-morrow night in a brand new farce entitled "Never Say Die," of which he is co-author with W. H. Post. The piece is advertised as a "typical Collier entertainment," which is another way of proclaiming that its sole mission will be to make folk forget that there ever was a shadow along the road of life.

Mr. Collier scored his first big success in "The Man from Mexico," since the production of which he has appeared in "Caught in the Rain," "On the Quiet," "The Dictator," "A Lucky Star," and "I'll Be Hanged if I Do."

His last appearance in Washington was made last May with the Weber and Fields Jubilee aggregation of players.

When, of course, the American is to have been several months dead. He does not die, but recovers. The complications can well be imagined.

Supporting the star, a cast of great excellence will be in evidence, headed by Miss Paula Marr, of this city, in the leading feminine role, and includes Grant Stewart, Charles Dow Clark, Frederick Roland, Herbert Ayling, Nicholas Judels, John Chislow, John Adams, William Collier, Jr., Thomas McGrath, James Sheeran, Emily Fitzroy, and Ellen Errol.

Columbia—"Madame Sherry." Because every one all over the country is humming, singing, or whistling some numbers of the score of the sensational musical success, "Madame Sherry," which begins a week's engagement at the Columbia Theater to-morrow night, the impression is current in some quarters that the production's charm is in greater part musical. Report says that the light and breezy skit, "At the Seashore," is no less engaging than its score. The love of a man for a maid under odd circumstances is the reigning spell of the production.

Some idea of the fun developed may perhaps be gleaned by a summary of the characters of the play which, beside the lovers, include an Italian house painter, his Irish wife, a lively fun-loving actress, a New York man about town, an amusingly whimsical uncle of the maid in love, and others, including the pupils of a dancing school and the guests of a yacht party.

The humor, melody, color, and spirit of the production is beyond comparison. The cast, made up of a great many well-known favorites, not only in New York, but throughout the country, includes Edwin, Emma Alton, Virginia Polts, Nan Tasker, William Cameron, Walter Moore, George Schiller, Harry Elk, and A. L. McGarry.

The popular songs and the one that runs through the entire performance, "Every Little Movement Has a Meaning of Its Own," has never been equaled for popularity.

The production novelists introducing "The Birth of Passion," the famous "Dance Dance," and others, are said to be entrancing.

Columbia—"Zimballist." Efrem Zimballist will be presented in concert at the Columbia Theater Wednesday afternoon at 4:30 o'clock by T. Arthur Smith, who has been striving for a Washington date for this Russian's supreme, master of the violin ever since the furore he occasioned here last January when he appeared as the soloist with the Philharmonic Society of New York. His technical skill was remarkable; that he was subtle without affectation; that he commanded by beauty rather than by power; for the coming concert he has selected a programme of commanding merit which includes two notable numbers by the artist himself. In its entirety it is as follows:

1. Sonata, D minor..... Brahms.
2. Adagio.....
3. In poco presto e con sentimento.....
4. Scherzo.....
5. (a) "Cherry Ripe."
6. (b) "The Song."
6. (c) "The Song."
7. Pizzicato solo.....

Mr. Eugene Lasky.....
8. "Cherry Ripe."
9. "The Song."
10. "The Song."
11. "The Song."
12. "The Song."

Chase's—"Polite Vaudeville." Chase's this week will have the pleasure of introducing to polite vaudeville Lulu Glaser, one of the most captivating comedienne of the American stage, who has starred in numerous merry operas and

WEEK PROMISES BROAD SCOPE OF ENTERTAINMENT.

News of the Local Theaters

Editor's note—This column is devoted exclusively to Washington playhouses, their management, production, and the stage folk who will be seen in this city either this week or in the very near future.

John Findlay, the well-known character comedian in "Our Wives," which comes to the National this week, has been in this country since 1898. He made his first appearance in London in 1873 at the age of twenty-one.

Arthur R. Ryan, who has been loaned by Henry W. Savage to Richard Bennett, was in the city during the past week arranging for the forthcoming engagement at the Columbia Theater of "The Stronger Claim."

"The Land of the Dykes," the new Sam Chip-Mary Marble Hollander comedy, was written by Herbert Hall Winslow, with music and lyrics by Albert Von Tilzer, the composer of popular ballads.

Manager Peck announces that on election night, he has arranged for a first-class entertainment to be presented by the members of the "Gaiety Girls" company. This will follow immediately the regular burlesque show, and will run until 1 a. m. Special leased wire service will bring news of the election returns to the stage of the Gaiety, and the news bulletins will be read at frequent intervals during the evening.

Pol's announces two performances for election night. The first entertainment will begin at 7:30, and the second about 9:45. During the intermissions between acts the election returns will be read to the audience, the news being received by direct leased wire to the theater.

Paula Marr has created the leading feminine role with William Collier in "A Lucky Star." "I'll Be Hanged if I Do," "Take My Advice," and the most recent Collier success, "Never Say Die," which will be seen at the Belasco this week.

Louis Francis Brown, business manager for the Burton Holmes travelogues, will arrive in the city this week to arrange for the Washington season, which opens at the Columbia Theater November 17.

T. Arthur Smith has had his office force at work during the past week effecting the delivery of season tickets to subscribers for the orchestral concerts of the New York Philharmonic Society, the first of which is scheduled for November 24, at the National.

Frank Mandel, one of the adapters of "Our Wives," has had plays accepted this fall by David Belasco, Charles Frohman, and John W. Aldrich. "Our Wives" is his first play to be produced.

It is expected that many of the packing crews in Washington department stores will challenge Hardens to a test of skill during this week at Pol's. Hardens will endeavor to escape from any packing case which may be constructed and brought to the theater, in which he will permit himself to be inclosed by the packers.

Frederic Shipman, who will bring Frances Alda to the Columbia Theater November 23, is also directing the concert tours of William Nordica, Mary Hall-lick, and David Braham.

La Belle Helene is one of the principal features of the aggregation gathered together by Manager Dunn, of the "Stars of Stagedale," which opens its engagement at the Lyceum this week. She is presenting the Parisian sensation, "Escaped from the Harem."

There are nine songs in the new musical comedy, "In Search of a Past," which Felix and Claire are now giving in vaudeville. Their "Silhouette Dance" has proven a sensational success. It is reported.

Gwendolyn Piers, who comes here in "Our Wives," is a protégée of Julia Marlowe, and it was at her suggestion that she left a New York courtship where she was studying, and joined her company.

William Collier, aside from being a star and a playwright, is the host of the William Collier Comedy Theater, New York, one of the most popular high-priced playhouses of the metropolis. It was here that "Bunty Pulls the Strings" scored its brilliant success.

One of the interesting specialties in the olio at the Gayety this week will be Gus Fay's original skit called "The Last Day at School," in which the German comedian is assisted by the most youthful members of the "Gaiety Girls" chorus.

"I do not want to be known as a one-part actor only," declared David Higgins recently, and true to his confession of faith he has laid aside "His Last Day at School," in which he might have appeared profitably for the remainder of his days on the stage. He has chosen a new and clever comedy vehicle, "The Road to Mandalay," announced as the feature extra-ordinary of the Casino for this week. Miss Stacey, who was for five seasons leading woman for James T. Powers, will be assisted in the act by Nat K. Coffery, a talented singer, and the production is heralded as one of the most original and Oriental scenic spectacles.

Other features of the unusual bill include Ruth Wright, a dainty singer of delightful songs; Dave Willington, in novel feats of burlesque jugglery; Young and Manning, in a blackface Southern plantation romance, "A Day in Dixie"; Russ Fort and Ralph Earle, in a merry mixture of music and nonsense, and the Cullen brothers, in an offering of the whirlwind variety which is said to be unique and enjoyable. The motion pictures are promised to be new and interesting.

Lyceum—"Stars of Stagedale." The costumes are of a dazzling splendor, and the chief ingredients of the offering are the "Stars of Stagedale," which is registered to make its headquarters at the Lyceum this week.

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SCENE FROM "MADAME SHERRY"

COLUMBIA

CLARA RACKETT

Gayety

GRETCHEN SHERMAN

ACADEMY

LULU GLASER

CHASE'S

WILLIAM COLLIER - BELASCO

BLANCHE BAIRD - LYCEUM

PAMELA GAYTHORNE

NATIONAL

Gayety

Chase's

Academy

Columbia

Belasco

Lyceum

National

Gayety

Chase's

Academy

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